

Message Text

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FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO AMEMBASSY PARIS IMMEDIATE

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FOR ASSISTANT SECRETARY ENDERS

FOLLOWING SENT SECSTATE WASHDC BRUSSELS THE HAGUE FROM
LUXEMBOURG 19 MAR 75:

QUOTE LIMITED OFFICIAL USE LUXEMBOURG 0194

E. O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: EAIR, LU

SUBJECT: CIVIL AVIATION: RUMORED FUSION OF KLM, SABENA
AND LUXAIR

1. THE RUMORS OF A POSSIBLE FUSION SURFACED IN THE PRESS
MARCH 19 WHEN MARCEL MART, MINISTER OF TRANSPORT, REVEALED
THAT HE HAD EXCHANGED IDEAS ON A STRICTLY PERSONAL BASIS
WITH HIS BELGIAN AND DUTCH COLLEAGUES. ACCORDING TO MART,
THIS UNOFFICIAL DISCUSSION DEALT WITH A RATIONALIZATION OF
AIR ROUTES RATHER THAN WITH A FUSION OF THE THREE AIRLINES.
MART ADDED THAT THE MAIN ELEMENTS OF ANY AGREEMENT WOULD
HAVE TO BE EXPLORED, IN THE FIRST INSTANCE, BY THE TWO INTER-
NATIONAL AIRLINES, KLM AND SABENA, AND ONLY LATER WITH
LUXAIR.

2. PIERRE HAMER, GOL DIRECTOR OF CIVIL AVIATION,
AND ROGER SIETZEN, DIRECTOR OF LUXAIR, ADMITTED TO ECON OFFICER
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THAT THE SUBJECT OF A FUSION OF THE THREE BENELUX

AIRLINES, KLM, SABENA AND LUXAIR, HAD BEEN RECENTLY DISCUSSED INFORMALLY BY THE BENELUX MINISTERS OF TRANSPORT. BOTH HAMER AND SIETZEN DENIED THAT ANY FORMAL DISCUSSION OR NEGOTIATIONS HAVE TAKEN PLACE OR ARE SCHEDULED, INVOLVING LUXAIR AT LEAST. THEY WERE SKEPTICAL ABOUT THE POSSIBILITIES OF SERIOUS NEGOTIATIONS ON FUSION WITH LUXAIR. SIETZEN SAID THAT LUXAIR MIGHT GAIN CERTAIN ADVANTAGES FROM A FUSION OF SERVICES, SUCH AS COMBINING OFFICES IN EUROPEAN CITIES SERVED BY LUXAIR AND KLM OR SABENA, BUT HE SAW NO GREAT ADVANTAGES FOR LUXAIR IN ANY FUSION SINCE LUXAIR DOES NOT COMPETE DIRECTLY WITH EITHER KLM OR SABENA. HE THOUGHT THAT ANY IMPORTANT NEGOTIATIONS WOULD HAVE TO BE CONCLUDED FIRST BETWEEN KLM AND SABENA. ONLY THEN, MIGHT LUXAIR SERIOUSLY CONSIDER SUCH NEGOTIATIONS.

3. THE ABOVE REACTIONS TO THE FUSION PROPOSAL WERE CONFIRMED BY MFA SOURCES AS WELL. FARKAS UNQUOTE INGERSOLL

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